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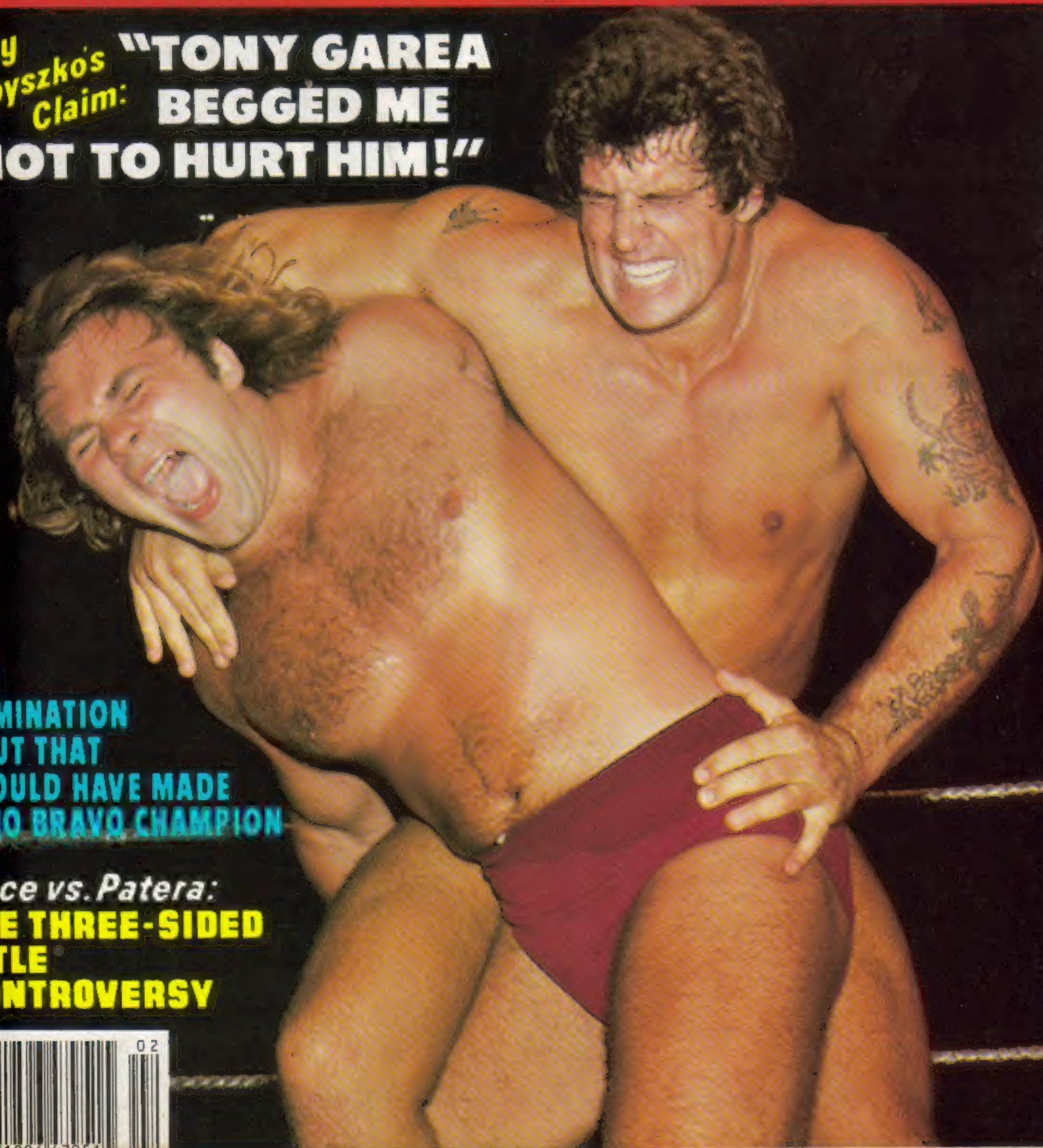


THE **Wrestler**

**Larry
Zbyszko's
Claim:** **"TONY GAREA
BEGGED ME
NOT TO HURT HIM!"**

**THE
ELIMINATION
BOUT THAT
SHOULD HAVE MADE
DINO BRAVO CHAMPION**

**Race vs. Patera:
THE THREE-SIDED
TITLE
CONTROVERSY**



OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

Champion: BOB BACKLUND

- 1—SGT. SLAUGHTER
- 2—HULK HOGAN
- 3—KILLER KHAN
- 4—KEN PATERA
- 5—PEDRO MORALES
- 6—LARRY ZBYSZKO
- 7—TONY ATLAS
- 8—STAN HANSEN
- 9—PAT PATTERSON
- 10—RICK MARTEL

AMERICAN WRESTLING ASSOCIATION

Champion: VERNE GAGNE

- 1—NICK BOCKWINKEL
- 2—DINO BRAVO
- 3—JOHN STUDD
- 4—CRUSHER
- 5—TITO SANTANA
- 6—CRUSHER BLACKWELL
- 7—DR. BILL IRWIN
- 8—JESSE VENTURA
- 9—MAD DOG VACHON
- 10—ADRIAN ADONIS

MOST POPULAR

- 1—ANDRE THE GIANT
- 2—BRUNO SAMMARTINO
- 3—DUSTY RHODES
- 4—BOB BACKLUND
- 5—TONY ATLAS
- 6—RIC FLAIR
- 7—PEDRO MORALES
- 8—BOB BACKLUND
- 9—DINO BRAVO
- 10—TED DiBIASE



KILLER KHAN



DINO BRAVO



TONY ATLAS



ANDRE THE GIANT

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

Champion: HARLEY RACE

- 1—GREG VALENTINE
- 2—DICK SLATER
- 3—HUSSEIN ARAB
- 4—TONY ATLAS
- 5—BUGSY McGRAW
- 6—KEN PATERA
- 7—THE GRAPPLER
- 8—TED DiBIASE
- 9—TERRY FUNK
- 10—LES THORNTON

TAG TEAMS

- 1—THE SAMOANS
- 2—JIMMY SNUKA & RAY STEVENS
- 3—ADRIAN ADONIS & JESSE VENTURA
- 4—THE FREEBIRDS
- 5—BARRY WINDHAM & SCOTT MCGHEE
- 6—THE SHEEPHERDERS
- 7—THE MOONDOGS
- 8—TOMMY & EDDIE GILBERT
- 9—STAN STASIAK & KILLER BROOKS
- 10—TERRY ORNDORFF & JUNKYARD DOG

MOST HATED

- 1—GREG VALENTINE
- 2—LARRY ZBYSZKO
- 3—KILLER KHAN
- 4—JIMMY SNUKA
- 5—OLE ANDERSON
- 6—TERRY GORDY
- 7—STAN STASIAK
- 8—JOHN STUDD
- 9—STAN HANSEN
- 10—EDDY MANSFIELD

CORRESPONDENTS Reports

GREENSBORO, NC—Correspondent: Horace Terry—

A lot more than a match was at stake when Masked Superstar teamed with Blackjack Mulligan to destroy former friends and current enemies Jimmy Snuka and Ray Stevens, NWA tag team champs. Superstar was out for blood to pay back what he felt was crass insensitivity to his problems demonstrated by Snuka and Stevens. Yet it was the champions who broke the rules as Superstar showed a clear commitment to scientific wrestling, guided by the gentle hand of Mulligan. The good guys won by disqualification as Snuka and Stevens slithered back to their dressing room.

In other bouts, The Fabulous Shepherders defeated Buzz

If you would like your area of the country represented in these reports, while also being officially credited with your own by-line, send us reports of the matches you attend. You will have the thrill of seeing your name in an internationally known magazine while at the same time helping to improve the quality of wrestling in your area. So why not give it a try? You will be glad you did!

Send your reports to: Correspondent Editor, Box 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571.

Sawyer and Matt Borne . . . Swede Hanson and Dewey Robertson stopped Don Kernodle and Nick DeCarlo . . . Paul Jones halted Gene Anderson . . . Ivan Koloff whipped S.D. Jones . . . Ric Flair beat Greg Valentine.



Jimmy Snuka and Ray Stevens, flanking manager Gene Anderson, retained their NWA tag team championship against Masked Superstar and Blackjack Mulligan by technicality when they were disqualified.

BUFFALO, NY—Correspondent: Mike Muscasella—This bout proved to wrestling fans everywhere that Paul Jones had indeed turned his back on rulebreaking. Faced with Jones' relentless offensive, Hussein "Iron Sheik" Arab was on the defensive



Paul Jones' battle with Hussein Arab proved he is sincere about changing back to scientific wrestling.

throughout the bout. At one point, Jones snared Hussein in his famed Indian Deathlock, but Iron Sheik wriggled free. But not for long. Finally Jones ended Iron Sheik's efforts with a cradle.

In other bouts, The Destroyer figure-foured Bob Marcus . . . Ric Flair and Blackjack Mulligan stomped Greg Valentine and Bad Bobby Duncum.

CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA—Correspondent: Ingrid Heyblom—This was a really wild match. Originally, Jose Peron squared off against Kelly Kiniski, son of former world heavyweight champion Gene Kiniski. When it became obvious Peron couldn't win, his buddy Mike Sharpe leaped into the ring and seriously injured Kiniski with three straight piledrivers. But Sharpe wasn't finished. He rammed Kiniski into the ringposts, flung him out of the ring onto the cement, and smashed a chair over his skull.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING!

By BILL APTER



In one night, Tony Atlas (above left) captured the Georgia Heavyweight championship and an opportunity to wrestle Harley Race for the NWA title. Scott McGhee and Barry Windham pose with their Florida tag team belts for the first time (above right).

TONY ATLAS HAD one helluva night at Atlanta, Georgia's Omni. After whipping Dennis Condrey for the state title, Atlas went on to win a 22-man, over-the-top-rope battle royal. Tony's prize for his great evening—a title match against Harley Race.

"I'm in the best shape of my life," the muscular Atlas told me in his dressing room moments after the battle royal. "I feel that I will win the NWA title because I am more confident than ever." Congratulations to Tony Atlas—a great athlete and a great guy!

Captain Louis Albano has

brought the team of the Moondogs to the WWF. The good Captain says these guys are real psycho cases and he has to keep a doctor with them at all times! . . . The young duo of Barry Windham and Scott McGhee have won the Florida tag team belts after

(Continued on page 52)

YOU ASKED US

Here's the monthly feature which YOU get to write! It's your chance to have a top wrestler answer YOUR question! Only the best questions will be answered—so put on your thinking caps and come up with some good ones! Address your questions—and who you would like to have answer them—to: **YOU ASKED US, c/o THE WRESTLER, PO BOX 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571.** Questions will be answered only in this column and at our discretion!



Andre the Giant has wrestled the Samoans in both tag team and individual competition and has drawn the conclusion that they are truly crazed animals.



Fritz Von Erich says he tries to remain a detached outsider when he sees his sons in action.

Q: "Why don't you, Andre the Giant, wrestle one of The Samoans individually?—Scott Snow, North Grafton, MA

A: "Well, Scott, I have wrestled those crazy men in the past. And I must say they are truly insane," replied Andre. "They do not know how to wrestle. All they can do is break the rules. I do not enjoy wrestling them, but someone must drive them out of wrestling before it is too late."

Q: "How does Fritz Von Erich feel when he sees one of his sons getting beat on in the ring?—Darlene Schrier, Dallas, TX

A: "My boys know what a tough, violent sport this is," responded Fritz. "Obviously, no father wants to see his son get hurt. But I try and disassociate myself from my role as father when I see David or Kevin or Kerry in the ring. I hate to see them hurt, but you have to say they've dished out

(Continued on page 50)

Every issue, this magazine praises the noteworthy and damns those who violate the spirit of wrestling's dignity. The praiseworthy are given a "thumbs up," the disgraceful are marked with "thumbs down." Here is this month's roll of honor and shame

Thumbs Up



THUMBS UP to Captain Lou Albano: Though his methods and philosophy shock many, Captain Lou Albano's brilliant strategies again paid off in another championship. By guiding The Samoans back to the WWF tag team title, Albano demonstrated his unparalleled genius and assured himself a place among wrestling immortals.

THUMBS UP to Pedro Morales: By carrying the banner of scientific wrestling into his battle against Ken Patera, Morales upheld the faith placed in him by fans everywhere. No WWF rulebreaker can feel safe with Pedro Morales in the same area.



THUMBS DOWN to Sgt. Slaughter: His insolent, arrogant manner disgraces wrestling and the uniform he once wore. By taunting fans, wrestlers, and TV announcers, Slaughter shows little regard for even the bare courtesies of professional wrestling. Hopefully WWF champion Bob Backlund will teach Slaughter the meaning of respect.

THUMBS UP to Sir Oliver Humperdink: Finally, Humperdink saw the non-productive, essentially self-destructive aspects of his life and changed his ways. Perhaps serving as Dusty Rhodes' valet for 30 days influenced Humperdink that the price of illegal behavior is a high one.



THUMBS DOWN to Jimmy Snuka: By refusing to understand manager Gene Anderson's tumultuous family problems, both Snuka and Ray Stevens exhibit callous indifference to a man responsible for much of their success. Friends are expected to understand each others' problems. Evidently neither Snuka nor Stevens understand the meaning of the word.

(Continued on page 48)

Thumbs Down

Q & A

Each month, **THE WRESTLER** will present a "Question and Answer" forum with an important figure in the wrestling world. It is your chance to meet wrestling's biggest stars as they answer the questions uppermost on the fans' minds



Ric Flair applies a half-nelson in an attempt to roll Harley Race over into a pinning combination during a title match last year. Flair feels he is being unfairly denied another shot at the title.

Q: Is Ric Flair angry?

A: Upset might be the better word. I don't know what's coming down with Race. How he can continue to ignore me, Ric Flair, the very best wrestler in the NWA, astonishes me. I would be champion already if that slob hadn't found new ways to cheat every damn time we wrestled.

Q: Why do you think Race avoids you?

A: Gotta be fear. He comes into the area and wrestles Sweet Ebony Diamond, who's a good friend and fine wrestler, but I deserve the first shot, not Ebony or anyone else for that matter.

Q: Did your loss of the U.S. title have anything to do with Race avoiding you?

A: No, he doesn't wrestle Valentine either. Race is just plain scared. He knows his time is comin' real soon when he won't be able to successfully defend his belt, and he's plum scared to death of that possibility. Whether I am U.S. champion or top contender to that pig Valentine doesn't matter when assessing who belongs as number-one NWA contender. I can't see anyone even second to me in terms



RIC FLAIR

AT ONE TIME, Ric Flair was the challenger to Harley Race's NWA championship. It seemed just a matter of time before Flair overcame Race's questionable tactics and seized the diamond-studded belt. Yet for quite a while now, Flair has been ignored by Race. At first, Flair thought the fact Greg Valentine currently holds the United States Heavyweight title had something to do with this abrupt change of policy.

But in Race's recent visits to the Mid-Atlantic area, the champion has ignored Valentine as well. Ric Flair's general attitude can best be characterized as angered bewilderment.

of skill, raw ability, or looks.

Q: What can you do to get a title shot if Race continues to refuse wrestling you?

A: Good question. I got some strategies to smoke him out, but I don't think I'd best tell them in print or else he'll get wind of 'em, have someone read it to him, you know he can't read or sign his name, and then the strategy will be ruined.

Q: Could you give a hint?

A: Nope, sorry, wouldn't be wise.

Q: Would you care to talk about Greg Valentine?

A: Well, I shouldn't go on too long about Valentine this close to lunch. There isn't anyone in all the world I hate like I hate that bum Valentine. But I've gone on and on about Valentine for too long now. I'm gettin' tired of the subject. He and I will settle this in the ring one day, soon as he gets up the guts to wrestle me. Then he'll be done and some kinda dignity will be returned to the Mid-Atlantic area.

Q: Are you saying Valentine brings down the level of dignity?

A: Oh, yeah, for sure. He kinda symbolizes the very worst of mankind. He

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Flair uses all his strength in an effort to yank Jimmy Snuka's shoulder out of its socket. Flair insists that despite losing the U.S. championship, he has proven himself worthy of the number-one challenger's position.

INTRODUCING STEVE O



STEVE OLSONOSKI IS anything but your typical wrestler. His background is rich in education, teaching, and other sports. He adopts a calm, well-dressed appearance. And he doesn't intend to be wrestling for the rest of his life.

No, Steve "O," as he is affectionately called in

Georgia, is representative of the new breed of professional wrestler.

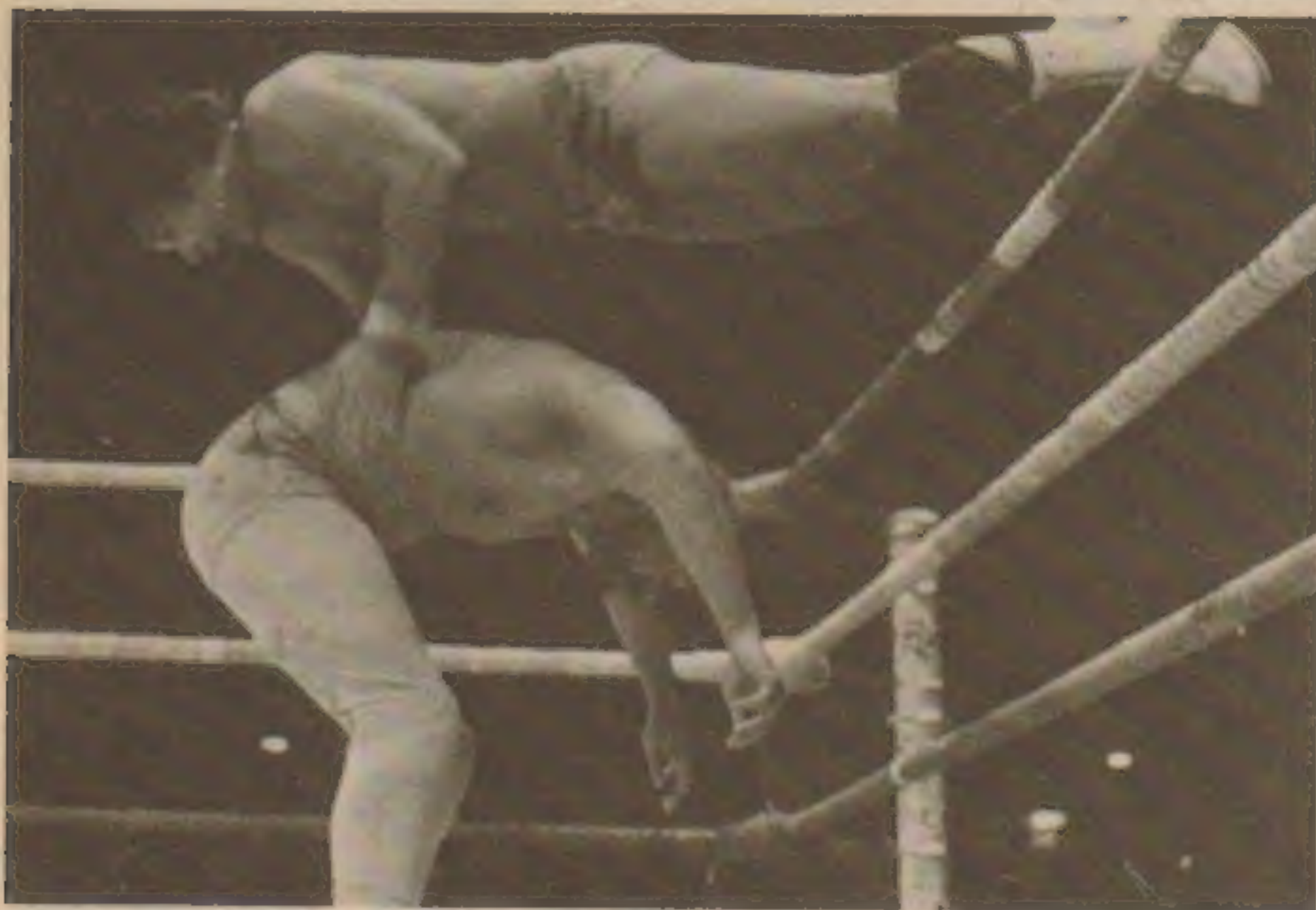
Born in Charlotte, North Carolina, 27 years ago, Olsonoski attended Edina High School and avidly followed his father's athletic exploits.

"Dad played for four years with the Green Bay Packers,"

said Olsonoski. "I grew up in a real athletic environment. Also, Bronco Nagurski [former football great and NWA champion in 1939] is a very close family friend and he used to counsel me to try and explore all sports to see which one I liked."

While at Gustavus Adolphus

Every so often a truly unique individual breaks into professional wrestling. Such a new personality has arrived and his name is Steve Olsonoski, or Steve O to his legions of Georgia fans. Already, Steve has captured the hearts and minds of the fans with his brilliant scientific wrestling



Steve O dives over the top rope, grabbing Jesse Ventura's hips for a rollover pin attempt (above). Steve twists his feet into Masked Superstar's midsection (right). Steve lets out a shout as he tries to turn Bobby Duncum over in a Boston crab (below).



College in Minnesota, Olsonoski wrestled, played hockey, baseball, and football, somehow finding the time around his strenuous academic activities which led to a degree in Physical Education with a minor in Biology.

"When I was graduated, I still wasn't certain what sport I wanted to get into," said the 230 pounder. "So I taught a year of physical education at a junior high school. Then, I went into pro wrestling."

Olsonoski captured awards the moment he entered wrestling. In addition to being named AWA Rookie of the Year in 1978, Olsonoski also captured the prestigious Pacific Northwest title.

"I love to win titles," said

(Continued on page 49)



Displaying a trace of his scientific background, Grappler tries to roll Paul Orndorff over for a pin.

THE GRAPPLER— MASK OF SHAME

BY MATT BROCK

I GET RATHER hardened after so many years covering wrestling. You think you've seen everything, think every brand of evil has crossed your eyes at one time or another. And then you see a man you once called friend wrestling behind a mask. You see this bum you called friend tearing men's limbs apart and chomping on arms and spitting at fans.

And you wonder what's wrong with the human race.

It's been a long time since I'd seen him. For lack of a better name, I'll call him "M." Several years ago, I was covering a match in the South, don't exactly remember where, and I



Formerly a captivating stylist in the ring, Masked Superstar has adopted a new identity and a new wrestling style. Orndorff is forced to recognize the change.

saw this really terrific wrestler M knew all the moves, knew how to set up his opponent, knew when to blast away with a savage forearm smash and when to gracefully execute a brilliant scientific maneuver

I stopped by his dressing room to interview M. He was cordial, frank, and witty. At once I detected a depth of intelligence and decency rarely seen in professional sports. He was a good man. I wrote a lengthy article on him, trying my journalistic best to maintain a degree of impartiality

But it was difficult for I genuinely liked this man. More so, I genuinely respected him for what he was trying to achieve



Grappler reverses the effects of Orndorff's attempted suplex as he shifts his weight and sends Paul landing on his back.

Who is this masked man? All efforts to discover his identity have met with frustrating failure. Apparently he has no past that could be learned in the course of an investigation. Apparently no one knows who he is or where he comes from. But someone better find a way to stop him before he destroys Louisiana wrestling

We kept in touch over the years, exchanging bits of gossip and holiday greetings. I finagled my way into covering another of his matches. I should have realized something was going wrong from that bout

Something simply wasn't right. Where once there'd been flashy maneuvers, now there was a headlong, physical assault. Where once there'd been a carefully plotted strategem, now there was action and reaction, nothing more. And most of all, where once there'd been an inner grace, now there was harshness

I went back to the dressing room to speak to M. I expected a friendly shake and a big smile. Instead I received awkwardness bordering on embarrassment



Whereas a match between Wahoo McDaniel and Masked Grapp er might have ended with a handshake not long ago McDaniel now lies between the ropes spilling blood



McDaniel gets the better of the action (above) as he clamps on an armlock. Despite the covering on his face, Matt Brock immediately recognized his friend "M" who is now hated by the fans as the Masked Grappler. Brock has no explanation for the change that has come over the man.

M didn't want to discuss the match. When I asked why he wrestled that way, he grew sullen and stormed into the shower. I'm not averse to conducting interviews anywhere, so I stood outside the shower and, as a friend, asked him what was wrong, whether it was a personal problem. All I received for my interest was a bar of Ivory Soap flung at my head.

Still, I sent him a little note. I got nothing back in return. I tried calling, but the messages left on his answering service were never returned. I was reluctant to dissolve a valued friendship. But nothing worked.

Then I was assigned to Louisiana to cover the impending title match between then-North American champion Ted DiBiase and someone named Masked Grappler. Sounded like your typical handsome, nice kid versus a deranged madman from another planet.

I got to my seat late, just after the opening bell. Flipping open my reporter pad, I jotted notes on

DiBiase and casually checked out his opponent. My jaw dropped into my knees when I realized it was my old buddy, M.

Well, it was and it wasn't. The guy I remembered was a terrific wrestler and a helluva guy. This man was a complete nut, a hoodlum, a mere thug slipping into trunks, boots, and mask bent on dismembering a fine young wrestler.

I never made any notes for my shock was too intense. I watched with increasing indignation as Masked Grappler battered DiBiase with a variety of fiendish maneuvers. Finally, the rulebreaker emerged victorious and won the crown.

By now rageful, I stormed toward the dressing room to confront him. He wouldn't let any of the reporters in. My rage consuming me, I banged on the door until he opened. He recognized me and I thought I saw a flush darken the mask.

I asked him how he could do such a thing and he quickly, though sputteringly, denied he knew who I was. I told him I knew his identity, knew what he once stood for, what he had meant to thousands of fans, and what he had meant to a great sport. I told him he disgraced everything wrestling stood for to countless millions. I continued my harangue unbroken for 15 minutes until, exhausted and gasping, M looked me straight in the eye and told me to throw myself under a truck.

Once the door closed, reporters crowded about me, eager for his identity. I debated whether to let on his real name. I really wanted to exact true, crushing vengeance for this horrible treachery.

I didn't. And I won't in this article. Though he may not care, I have loyalty to friendship. □

Race vs. Patera:

PHOTOS BY ROGER DEEM

THE THREE-SIDED TITLE CONTROVERSY

(Editor's Note: Recently, Harley Race defended his NWA title against Ken Patera. Former six-time NWA champion Lou Thesz was signed as the special referee for the bout. What started as a routine title match soon became enveloped in controversy. Charges and countercharges were hurled by both Patera and Race. To try and sort out which man's story is closest to the truth, The Wrestler asked Race, Patera and referee Thesz for their versions of the story.)

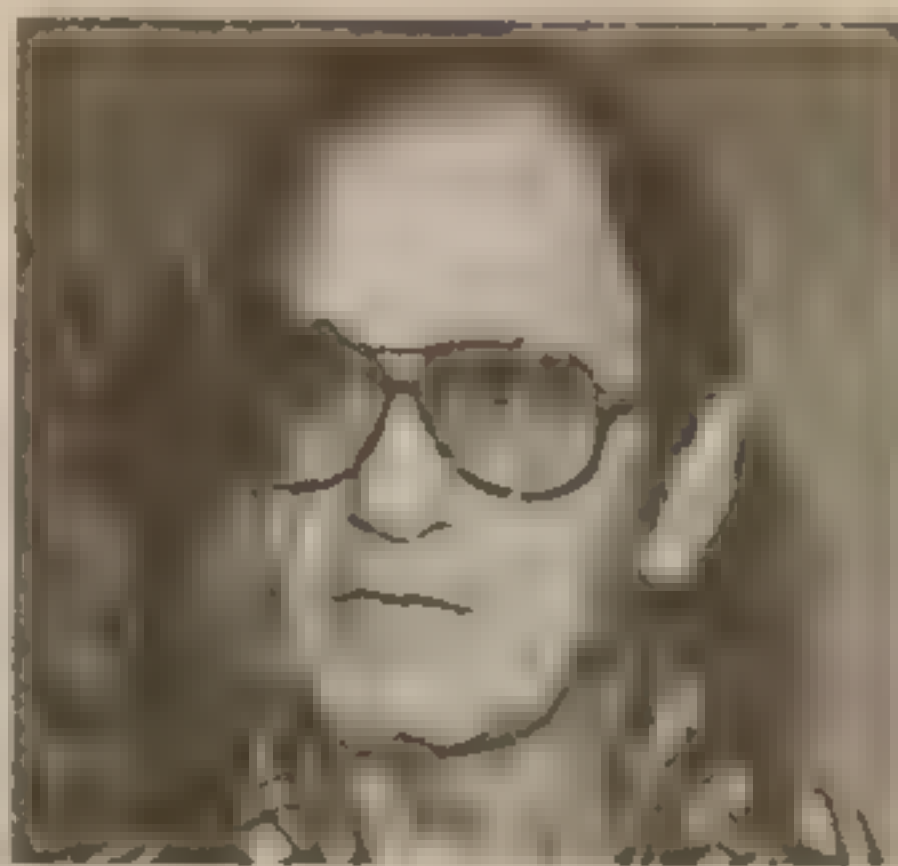
BY LOU THESZ

I HAVE SEEN an awful lot in my wrestling career. As most fans know, I've been an active wrestler for a few years and I've seen all kinds of men rise and fall within the squared circle. To really appreciate all aspects of this wonderful sport, a man should referee a few matches. What appears quite simple on the surface becomes a trying process requiring snap decisions. Sometimes you're wrong. But most times you're not.

I've been accused of unfairly interfering against Ken Patera during his title match against NWA champion Harley Race. That just isn't so.

This is what happened from my perspective in the ring, a totally unprejudiced perspective. I'm proud to say, Harley Race won the first fall and Patera captured the second. That set up the decisive third fall for the heavyweight

One of wrestling's most disputed decisions ever recently occurred in an NWA title match between champion Harley Race and Ken Patera. Usually such controversies are confined to the combatants. Not in this case. Special referee Lou Thesz has been accused of interfering on Race's behalf. In this article, all three sides of the dispute are given



championship of the world

Patera had Race against the ropes. I tried to break it up, as is my duty. It didn't matter that Patera was doing it. I would have acted the same way if it had been Patera pinned against the ropes. Anyway, Patera refused to release his hold. I insisted, snapping and ordering him to let go. Still he refused. I applied a wristlock and wrenched him off Race. Patera still struggled so I flipped him away to make sure both men were fairly separated and so Race couldn't take unfair advantage.

While Patera was getting up,



Patera uses his tremendous strength to force Race to the mat with a full-nelson (above). Lou Thesz (above left) had the tough assignment of keeping order.

Race seized him in the cradle and finished him off. I did what I did out of my duty as a wrestling referee with no favoritism intended toward anyone.



BY HARLEY RACE

WHAT MAKES ME champion is my superior brain. I know what to do in every conceivable situation that can occur in the ring. I'm never unprepared. I'm never out of position. I'm never caught off-guard. That's what makes me a champion and a bum like Patera a mere contender.

Using the most devious tactics imaginable, Patera got me against the ropes. Now I really didn't need any help from Thesz in breaking us up. I was about to break free myself and smash Patera out of the arena in about eight seconds. But that doesn't matter.

Thesz rightfully pulled Patera off me. If the bum had any idea how to wrestle, this never would've happened. But a punk like Patera knows only one way to wrestle, and that's being dirty.

When I saw Patera distracted by Thesz, I jumped into action. I was able to exploit the situation because I know what to do. How else do you think I became a four-time NWA champion?

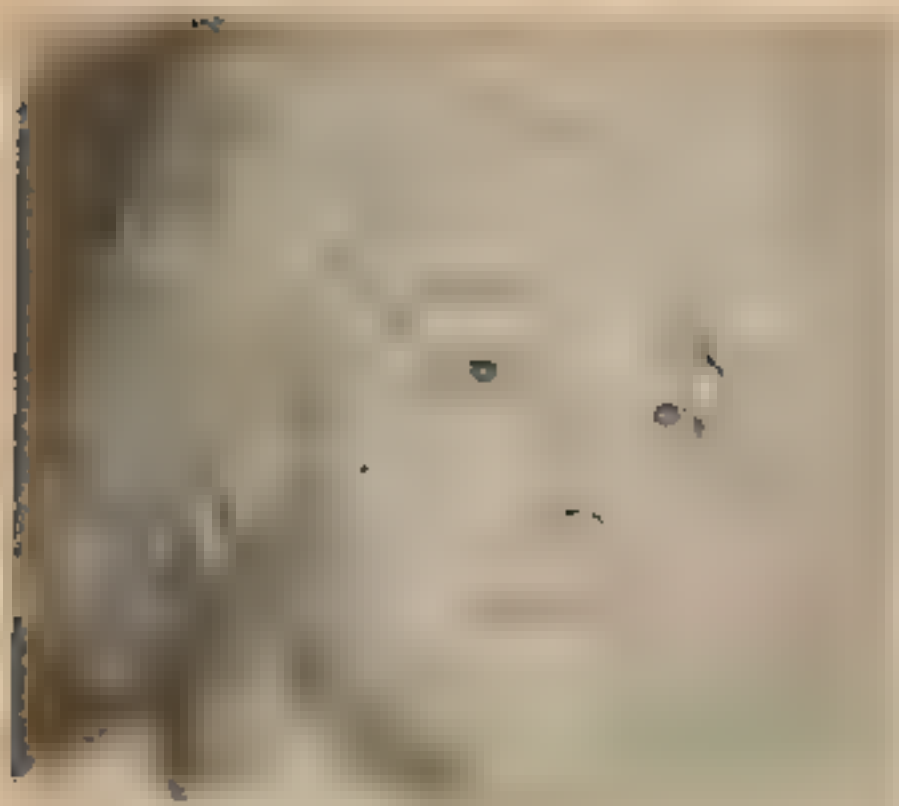
There was nothing out of the ordinary in this situation. Patera was free game for anything I wanted to do. If he had a half a brain he would've protected himself. But he's so damn stupid he can't anticipate.

Once again: Harley Race demonstrated why he is the greatest champion who ever lived and why Ken Patera will never be anything more than a loud-mouthed prelim bum.



Race yanks Patera back to center ring by his leg, while referee Thesz gets a close look at the action (above). Race is one of the few wrestlers to continue after being caught in Patera's swinging neckbreaker (below). Ken thought he was very close to victory before the controversial conclusion.





BY KEN PATERA

I WAS CHEATED out of the NWA title by that old fool Lou Thesz and his ignoramus flunkies Harley Race!

As all the world could see, Race cheated his way to a so-called win in the first fall. Luckily, I came back and surmounted the collective treachery of both Race and Thesz to take the second fall. If the rules had been followed, I would now be NWA champion. But they weren't.

I had Race at my mercy. I was about to deliver the final blow to

destroy the old man when his pal and good buddy Thesz came to his rescue. I wasn't doing anything wrong, but Thesz tried to pull me off anyway. I refused. And why shouldn't I? All Thesz was trying to do was save his buddy. He doesn't care about rules because he cheats.

Once attacked, I had to fight back. Still, I feel sorry for that feeble fool Thesz and didn't hurt him, even when he grabbed me in a wristlock and tried to knee me in the groin. So after he pulls me away, there should be a brief moment to let me get my wind. Isn't that only fair?

Neither of those guys know the first thing about fairness. While still recovering and on one knee, I look up and see that walrus Race rushing toward me. Now you don't see Thesz trying to help me, do you? Of course not. He lets his slob pal jump me and take the third fall.

I don't expect any help from anyone. I know the decision won't be reversed. Just let me warn Race and Thesz to watch out. □



Patera, wearing the Missouri State belt, also holds the Inter-Continental belt. Ken tells the St. Louis crowd that there is room for one more belt, that belonging to Harley Race (above). Patera lands an elbow to Race's chest (below left). Thesz asks Patera if he would like to submit as Race punishes him with kneedrops to the thigh (below right).



HUSSEIN ARAB'S MYSTERIOUS FEAR OF SWEET



BY STEVE FARHOOD

DURING MY CAREER as a wrestling writer, I've had the good fortune to travel to some pretty exotic places. One of those places was Syria, where I learned first-hand the immense popularity of The Sheik. While munching on *kibbe* in a small cafe on the outskirts of Damascus, I ran into Sweet Ebony Diamond. Imagine my surprise seeing this masked muscular man wandering down the streets of Damascus beset by beggar children. I did a double-take, spilling lamb on my white shorts, and, in characteristic chivalry, invited "Swebs," as he's known to his friends, to join me for lunch.

Both of us had a great deal to do. I mentioned a day at the camel races with a hot tip from an old Bedouin. But Swebs was secretive about his plans. I asked if he was taking in the usual sightseeing and he said no. I asked if he were just on a vacation and he said no. I asked if he were on business and his eyes hardened.

At that point Swebs stood up, thanked me for my company and tossed some travelers checks on the table. I started after him to return his money but he'd disappeared. Making a mental note to mail the money back once I returned to the States, I made my way to the track,

Fearlessness has become as much a part of Hussein Arab's character as his curled shoes and turban. Seemingly nothing could frighten Arab. Yet now Arab appears shaken at the mere thought of wrestling Sweet Ebony Diamond. And the reasons why are especially shocking

EBONY DIAMOND

PHOTOS BY GREG McDANIEL



Hussein Arab twists Sweet Ebony Diamond's wrist, flipping him to the canvas (left). Arab takes the battle out of the ring where he twists an electrical cord around Ebony's throat (above).

feeling somewhat guilty about using Sweet Ebony Diamond's money to bet on a long-shot camel in the third, but I don't think he would have minded


All this is by way of explanation for this article on why Hussein Arab fears wrestling Sweet Ebony

(Continued on page 56)

A tale of broken friendship saddens all who must bear witness. The disintegration of the Larry Zbyszko-Tony Garea friendship is no exception. Once friends, they are now sworn enemies, dedicated to each other's destruction. Many fans pray they will find a way to settle the feud before it's too late. That is highly unlikely. There is too much hatred at stake.

Larry Zbyszko's Claim:

PHOTOS BY STU SAKS



**"TONY
GAREA
BEGGED ME
NOT TO
HURT HIM!"**

TUCKED INTO LARRY ZBYSZKO'S oak bookcase is an olive-bound ledger reciting all his victories over the years. Mentioning Zbyszko's meticulous logging system shouldn't, on its face distinguish him from many other wrestlers. Most professional wrestlers keep some records to aid them in future matches and comfort them during difficult times

But Zbyszko's ledger has one slight alteration

"Thing about records, so many people give 'em different interpretations that they lose all impact," said Zbyszko, reclining in his cane rocker. "I believe in the sanctity of a record. It's all there in black and white with a little red from your opponent's face thrown in for good measure.

"Right here in this little book are the monumental achievements of Larry Zbyszko, the real Living Legend, the only qualified wrestler around left to challenge Howdy Doody Backlund. Yes," Zbyszko tapped the book, "right in this book is living, breathing proof of my greatness and the profound mediocrity of one Tony Garea."

Zbyszko smiled and rocked

"As those fans out there well know, I was WWF tag team champion a few years ago. It was a difficult time for me wrestling handicap matches every night," said Zbyszko, flipping open his book

"See?" Zbyszko jabbed his index finger at a few lines. All had been erased and re-written Zbyszko quickly closed the book as his guest squinted for a closer look

"It's right here in black and white. Every time I had to defend my title, I was facing two men. Now that's a rather abnormal situation. Not that I couldn't handle it, as my record



From these photos, it looks like it would be Zbyszko begging for mercy. Opposite left. Garea throws a stunned Zbyszko across the ring. Above: Larry looks to escape from the ring as Tony attacks from behind

book indicates," Zbyszko patted his book, "because I'm the only wrestler alive who could handle that kind of situation and emerge alive and triumphant

"See, most tag teams have two men. In our tag team, there was a man, me, and a coward, Tony Garea. I tell ya, you should've seen him before each match. I'd come in all psyched-

up and ready for action. Then Garea would come whimpering into the locker room. Every match he had a different excuse

"Either he'd have a headache or he'd have a cold or his stomach hurt. Always some reason why that coward didn't have the nerve to come into the ring and help me out, not that I

(Continued on page 58)

SIR OLIVER HUMPERDINK:



"PROTECT ME, DUSTY RHODES!"

THE SIR OLIVER HUMPERDINK-Lord Al Hays feud has taken on international dimensions, involving the United States State Department, the British Parliament, centuries of English tradition, and Her Majesty the Queen of England.

To bring everyone up-to-date, Sir Oliver Humperdink vowed to obey the ramifications of a

scheduled match between Ivan Koloff, a member of his stable at the time, and Dusty Rhodes. If Koloff lost, Humperdink would have to serve as Rhodes' valet for 30 days. Unfortunately for "Rooster" Humperdink, the brazen Russian lost the match. Almost everyone predicted Humperdink would find some way to wriggle out of his obligation.

But Humperdink, however reluctantly, served as Rhodes' valet for 30 days, doing everything from taking Rhodes' clothes to the cleaners, acting as butler, preparing meals, and vacuuming.

"I give Rooster a lotta credit," said Rhodes. "I didn't think he'd do it, but he did and without a whimper. I gained a whole lotta respect for Rooster."



The words coming from Sir Oliver Humperdink's lips are startling. Here is a man who vowed unconditional war upon all Florida scientific wrestlers begging for protection from Dusty Rhodes. This amazing personality change was not wrought overnight. Finally, Humperdink has understood what friendship is all about

PHOTOS BY JERRY PRATER

When Humperdink's commitment expired, all expected him to return to his old ways. So did Humperdink. But in his absence Lord Al Hays, a fellow Britisher, had dug his insidious claws into three of Humperdink's men

Dick Slater, Bobby Jagers, and Nikolai Volkoff had been Rooster's friends. Humperdink never thought they'd be capable of the treachery practiced by Hays

"We just sat down and decided that Humperdink ain't the man to handle us," declared Slater. "We need a smart guy, someone with brains and class, qualities Humperdink surely ain't got."

Humperdink insists his men did not voluntarily come to Hays'



This sequence of photos gives adequate explanation why Sir Oliver Humperdink turned away from the rulebreakers and turned to Dusty Rhodes for help. Opposite page: During a television interview, Bobby Jagers holds back Humperdink's arms. Top: Lord Al Hays slaps him across the face. Above: Jagers slugs Oliver from behind



Humperdink's face is a bloody mess as Jagers stomps away at his head. Not only did Hays take away Humperdink's wrestlers, but he saw to it that his knighthood was taken away, too. Humperdink is asking Florida's scientific wrestlers for help.

stable, but were the subject of intensive brainwashing.

"I know that creep's tricks," said Humperdink. "He used some kind of method to brainwash them and make them turn on me. He'll be sorry for that."

But Hays' sinister tactics didn't end at stealing Humperdink's men. Even worse was Hays' malevolent misuse of British governmental contracts to deprive Humperdink of his knighthood.

"I spoke to my dear friend Margaret Thatcher, the beloved Prime Minister of England," explained Hays. "After relating Humperdink's despicable

behavior, I suggest she strip him of his knighthood as a means to ensure this great honor not be trampled beneath the feet of a mere commoner. To be a knight is a revered status and Humperdink quite simply doesn't deserve the title. I always feel sorry for the poor old chap. Commoners are such an ignorant breed."

Humperdink was more hurt than angry when informed of the loss of his knighthood.

"I did nothing to disgrace my title," insisted Humperdink. "I have been loyal to the Queen and loyal to my oath. This is totally unfair to deprive a man of his

knighthood. It goes against the grand British tradition. You cannot turn back centuries of tradition through the evil efforts of one man. Yes, I am hurt, very, very hurt."

Despite his pain, Humperdink made no effort to contact Margaret Thatcher or the Queen of England.

"If that is their decision, I will abide by it," said Humperdink, his bearded face softening with sorrow. "I am a loyal subject and wouldn't think of disobeying a decision from my Queen. But dealing with Hays is another matter."

The final cataclysmic blow came when Jagers and Volkoff attacked Humperdink. If Rooster had any lingering hope of renewing his friendship with them, that assault permanently changed him.

"We're finished," swore Humperdink.

Perhaps the greatest change in Humperdink has been his new alliance with Dusty Rhodes.

"Serving as Dusty's valet really opened my eyes to the guy," said Humperdink of Rhodes, who stays in Humperdink's corner during matches. "I appreciated Rhodes for his personality and I think a friendship developed during those 30 days, though neither of us admitted it."

"I learned that Dusty Rhodes is a fine human being, a really sensitive guy who cares about his fellow man. To be honest, I didn't have the best attitude going into this valet thing and felt a lot of resentment."

"Dusty understood that and didn't ever try to rub it in. He was always courteous, always asked me very politely to do something, never ordering me around. And now I don't feel any embarrassment when I say, 'Protect me, Dusty Rhodes.'"

"You know, I may have lost my knighthood and my wrestlers, but I found a friend. And that makes everything else worthwhile." □

Tommy & Eddie Gilbert:

IT'S A MATTER of pride. That's why Tommy and Eddie Gilbert became the Southern tag team champions. It's the reason they plan to keep the title for a long time.

Recently, Tommy Gilbert explained the secret of their success. "I'm happier now than I ever have been," he said. "Eddie may not always have been the perfect son, but he's the perfect tag team partner. Hell, who am I kidding? Everyone knows I've thought Eddie was the perfect son since the day he was born."

"Let me tell you, wrestling with your son is the greatest thrill in the world. It's an incredible feeling of pride, joy, and accomplishment. Pride most of all, I guess. To watch my son constantly proving he's a man, proving he's a fine man, nothing could make me prouder. Then we help each other as equals, both working hard for a common



**FATHER
AND
SON**

CHAMPIONS

goal. I'm the happiest man on earth.

"Right now, it's something very special to be a Gilbert. It's the name of champions. We've earned the right to be champions. We did it together. I couldn't have done it without Eddie. Eddie couldn't have done it without me. Together, we're a force to be reckoned with. We've brought honor to the family

name. What could be better than that?"

As far as the Gilberts are concerned, nothing could be better. Ever since they first started to team, the world has been perfect.

"At first," Eddie admits, "I was a little worried. After all, the man is my father, and I'm used to taking orders from him. I wondered if he

could take orders from me, like a tag team partner must at some times. Before we stepped in the ring, though, I discovered I had nothing to worry about.

"He explained to me the facts of a wrestler's life. A man has to take responsibility for himself in that ring. The team was more important than either of us. He didn't choose me as a partner because he loved me, but because he thought I could get the job done. In a match, we're equals. When a son becomes a man, he said, that's the only way it can be.

"It's been a lot of hard work, but it's the easiest thing I've ever done. Let me explain. It's so exciting developing this team, making it worthy of a championship, that it doesn't seem like work. I'm so proud of what I'm doing—so proud of what we're doing—that I never want to leave the gym.

"I've been thinking about this

lately. If we were strangers, we'd still make an excellent tag team. But something would be missing. I can't describe it, but I know it's there. Dad calls it pride in the family. Maybe he's right. But pride doesn't seem to explain it all. There should be a word to mean something more special than pride. Something deeper, if you know what I mean."

Never in the history of organized sports have a father and son so honored a major tag team title in the manner of Tommy and Eddie Gilbert. Their spirited defense of the Southern tag team title leaves Tennessee fans gasping in amazement. Before long, they may go down as the greatest father-son team in wrestling history.



Tommy Gilbert figured there'd be one real problem with the team. That problem never materialized.

"When we first started," Tommy remembers, "I wondered what would happen if I saw Eddie being hurt. Would I break the rules to protect my son? In the first match, Eddie got into some trouble. Yet, I found I had enough faith in him to get out of it himself. He did get out of it. We went on to win that match. That's when I knew how much I respect my son. He can take care of his own battles."

It's this confidence, this pride, that makes them such a formidable team. Watching them win the title from Killer Karl Krupp and El Mongol was one of the great thrills in wrestling. This splendid team meshed perfectly. Father aided son and son aided father. Watching them, you understand what Eddie

Eddie Gilbert locks up Killer Karl Krupp's left arm (above left), forces him to the mat with a suplex (above right) and then resumes his painful armlock (below). After Eddie felt he had sufficiently weakened Krupp, he tagged off to his father, who put on the finishing touches.





Tommy leans back, adding excruciating pain to a chin lock (above left). Lifts Krupp high in the air for an atomic spinecrusher (above right), and applies the famous Gilbert armlock (below). The Gilberts stunned Krupp, El Mongol, and much of the wrestling world by capturing the AWA Southern tag team title



means when he says there's something special about them. The title match was a study in wrestling brilliance. There were no mistakes. It was as close to perfection as an athletic contest can get.

Even Killer Karl Krupp was impressed, though he never admitted it. However, when he went back to his manager, Jimmy Hart, after losing the title, Hart asked what happened. A reliable source overheard Krupp exclaim, "They were too damn good!" [Later, Krupp denied this.]

Tommy and Eddie Gilbert laughed when they heard what Krupp said. They laughed even louder when Eddie declared, "He's absolutely right!"

Tommy and Eddie Gilbert are champions. For a long time to come, they plan to keep the title in the family. □

MR. WRESTLING II plucked the beige towel off the stool and climbed into the stall for his ritual pre-match shower. For the last time. Usually II sings his lucky song, "Moon River," while bathing for a bout. Not this time. Only the sound of the water spraying across his muscular body and his muffled sighs could be heard in the respectfully quiet dressing room

After nearly 20 minutes, as if he wanted to delay this as long as possible, II emerged from the shower, toweling off his body and wiping dry his mask. Shuffling across the battered tile floor, II paused before his locker, his meaty hand resting on the doorknob, his thick fingers squeezing the metal in inner turmoil before a deep breath enabled him to wrench open the

locker

II's togs hung in the locker, along with the collection of memorabilia he has amassed over the years. A gentle smile captured his strong lips as II slumped onto the stool and leaned forward, reaching for the bottom of the locker

"You know, you end up collecting a lot of stuff over the

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER

ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT MR. WRESTLING II FROM RETIRING

The one nightmare all Georgia wrestling fans feared has finally happened. That apostle of decency and integrity, the one man who has stood as a beacon of fairness and kindness throughout his illustrious years, Mr. Wrestling II, has retired.

And only the fans can change his mind

course of a career," said II, opening a manila envelope. "Like this." II examined a yellowed wrestling program. "This is from the first match I ever had at the Omni. What makes it especially important to me is an autograph a little girl gave me. Yup, she gave me an autograph. Funny how things happen. I was walking out the side door, not really attracting

a whole lot of attention back then. I was holding the program like some star-struck kid and a little girl comes up to me, cute little thing with blonde pigtails and all. She asked me for my autograph and I quickly signed. I thanked her for asking and, as I started to walk away, she trailed after, tugging my overcoat. With the biggest and cutest little smile you've ever seen,

she asked if I wanted her autograph. Well, what could I say? I asked her to sign it, and this is the paper, this program." II sighed and slipped the ancient program back into the manila envelope. Though his career was over, he wasn't finished reminiscing.

II scooped up a plastic bag and untied the green twister. Filling the bottom of the baggie was a clump



Mr. Wrestling II is mobbed by his fans as he makes his way into the ring with partner Mr. Wrestling



of hair. II's hair

"This is a little souvenir from a past battle with Ole Anderson," said II. "He pulled out some of my hair and I just decided to save it as a reminder of that match. Nothing special, just a little thing to motivate me when I wrestle him . . ." II's voice trailed off. "Well, guess I won't be wrestling him again, huh?"

II dropped the bag onto the floor and reached for his boots. He paused on the first hole, chuckled, and looked up.

"I've had these boot laces for six years. They bring me luck. I don't know why they're so special, just works out that way. First time I wore them, I was real lucky to avoid serious injury from an

opponent. Not that the laces had anything to do with it, but I felt they were something of a good-luck charm. Silly how you get superstitious over the years, isn't it?"

II finished lacing up his boots and slipped on his trunks.

"My favorite pair of trunks," said II. "I couldn't imagine wrestling in any other pair of trunks but these," he patted his hip, sighing sadly.

II straightened, actually stiffening in distant anticipation for the match ahead. He and Tim "Mr. Wrestling" Woods were to take on The Masked Assassins. And this was to be II's last professional wrestling match.

"Ah, my mask," II caressed his

mask. "What would I be without my mask. This is a part of me, as much a part of me as a leg or arm. I wouldn't be where I am without my mask. I owe a great deal to it."

II closed the locker for the last time and stood, not moving, not wanting to move, not wanting to face the ultimate fact all athletes must inevitably encounter: retirement. His shoulders sagged slightly and his eyes grazed the floor. Suddenly II straightened and those brilliant eyes shone.

"But the most important thing for me has been the fans. Yup, it's



Mr. Wrestling II resists Assassin #2's effort to break II's headlock (left). In a touching display of emotion, Mr. Wrestling embraces II after his last bout (above).

the fans who gave the emotional love and support I've needed in my career. I love my fans and I'm glad they love me back," said II, the shining eyes misted with tears. "They make everything worthwhile. Without them there's no wrestling and without them I don't think I would've wrestled as long as I have.

"It's all for them. Especially this last one."

II walked proudly out the door, his boots snapping against the concrete floor. As he approached the roar of the arena, his proud head perked up and his chest puffed out.

Mr. Wrestling II has retired. And only the fans can persuade him to return. □

Bravo takes former AWA champion Nick Bockwinkel on an unscheduled flight.



THE ELIMINATION BOUT THAT SHOULD HAVE MADE DINO BRAVO CHAMPION

Dino Bravo has had to endure a great deal in his still-brief career. He has had to surmount disappointments, broken promises, and plain bad luck in his struggle to the top. Just when he thought he was one bout away from the AWA title, misfortune toppled upon his handsome face

THE DRESSING ROOM was strangely silent. The determination etched in Dino Bravo's face made everyone uncomfortable. Wrestlers were

relieved when it was their time to be called. Being near Bravo made people nervous.

Dino checked and rechecked his boots. His warm-up

exercises were done with precision. Chance would have no place in this match. Though the revenge might be hollow, it would be perfect.



Bravo loses his grip on Bockwinkel before he could successfully complete his backbreaker (above). Nick takes the advantage with a combination shoulder and armlock (below)



Dino had waited months for this confrontation. It was supposed to have been for AWA championship. When the match was contracted, Nick Bockwinkel held the title. It was to be a special championship match. If Bockwinkel was disqualified for any reason, he would lose the belt.

"It doesn't pay to wrestle Bockwinkel," Dino said at the time, "because he gets himself disqualified and keeps the title. I dare him to wrestle me for the title if he can't hide behind disqualification. I want it in the contract."

Naturally, Bockwinkel didn't want to sign. Then Dino made him an offer he couldn't refuse. Bockwinkel would get both purses, no matter what. Dino wouldn't earn a cent for the match. When you're talking greed, you're talking Bockwinkel's language. He quickly signed on the dotted line.

However, Bockwinkel was also cunning. He pushed the match months ahead, figuring Bravo would lose his edge. Instead, Nick lost the title to Verne Gagne.

Now, there was no title for Dino to win. Bockwinkel would get all the money. The AWA, to make matters a little fairer, declared this match would be to decide the top challenger for Gagne's title. However, the AWA will not change its rankings because of a disqualification. Nick, the top challenger, could retain that standing even if he lost by disqualification.

Bravo had nothing to gain from this match but revenge. He knew Bockwinkel would try to get himself disqualified if things got too rough. He'd try to pin Nick, but that wasn't likely. Instead, he looked at the match as a brawl to settle old scores. As Dino told a friend, "I don't want to beat him. This match, I want to hurt him."

Finally, the time came. Dino strode purposefully into the arena. His fists were clenched so tight that his knuckles were white. Some say they saw red between his knuckles, as if his nails had dug into his palms and drawn blood. If so, it wouldn't be the only blood spilled that night.

Bockwinkel was waiting for his foe. As soon as he saw Dino, Bockwinkel laughed. Dino just stared back, his eyes burning with hatred. When the bell rang, Dino rushed out at his foe.

Immediately, Dino realized his mistake. Bockwinkel had goaded him into being reckless. As he reeled from a forearm smash, Dino promised to himself that Bockwinkel wouldn't get in that easy again.

For the next several minutes, Dino dominated the action. His strategies were perfect, his maneuvers were brilliant, and Bockwinkel was forced to defend himself with all the power at his command. Bockwinkel's guile and cunning kept him from defeat. His veteran intelligence told him the match had gone on too long already.

Suddenly, a huge gash opened across Dino's forehead. It was horribly ugly. Even worse, the blood poured into Dino's eyes, blinding him. Bockwinkel took advantage of the situation.

It takes a special kind of man to batter a helpless opponent. It takes an even meaner man to batter that helpless opponent illegally. Fans turned away in horror and disgust as Bockwinkel tortured his foe. Blindly, Dino struggled back, and there was nothing he could do.

Finally, after far too long, the referee disqualified Bockwinkel. What Dino had dreaded most had happened. Bockwinkel was still the top challenger. For the night, Dino had only an empty, meaningless victory.

Bockwinkel howled with



A bloody Bravo tries to whip Bockwinkel across the ring (above), but his attempt is reversed, and Bockwinkel resumes the upperhand with a series of stomps in the corner (below)



laughter as he walked back to the dressing room. Dino wouldn't let himself think that if the match had taken place months before,

he would be champion.

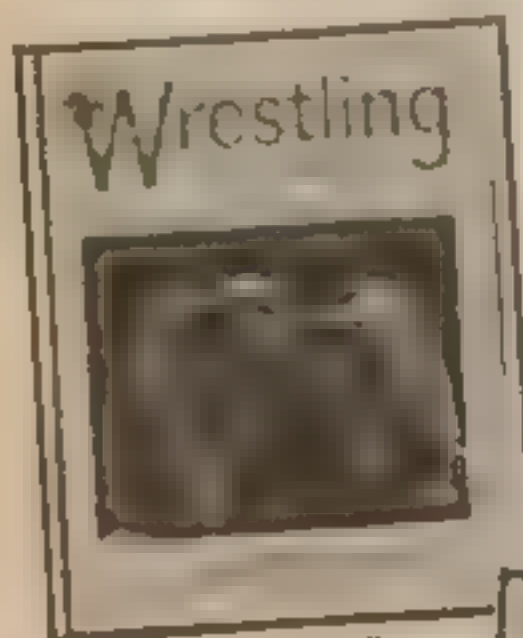
Dino couldn't let himself be tortured by what might have been. □

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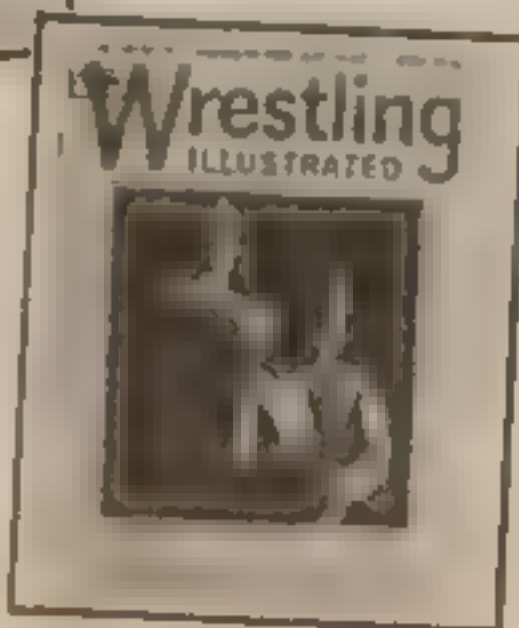
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THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

(Continued from Page 18)



THUMBS UP to Masked
Superstar: He made the difficult
decision to leave behind friends
and a wrestling style to which he
devoted himself with such sadistic
glee over the years. Whether
Superstar made the proper
decision rests upon his future
conduct and the willingness of
peers and Mid-Atlantic fans to give
him another chance

THUMBS DOWN to Bulldog
Brower: All attempts to reform
him by either psychiatric or
sociological methods have been
rebuffed. He insists on running
amuck at every opportunity. Now
he has allied himself with Texas
Brass Knuckles champion, Stan
Stasiak. Perhaps it is Stasiak's
sanity which should be questioned



THUMBS UP to Harley Race
Another champion would have
been content to stay on familiar
turf and defend his belt against old
challengers. Not Harley Race. He
ventured into foreign soil to pit his
NWA belt against WWF
champion Bob Backlund in a most
memorable match. Those who
accuse Race of ducking challenges
should re-read his record

THUMBS DOWN to Buggy
McGraw: In his zeal to rid America
of all foreign invaders, Buggy
McGraw may have gone too far.
Patriotic fervor is one thing when
directed against the likes of Ivan
Koloff and Nikolai Volkoff, but
turning on a friend like Dick Slater
is simply unforgivable.



STEVE O

(Continued from Page 25)



Olsonoski levels Super Destroyer Mark II with a perfectly placed flying dropkick. Steve wants to make his mark on the sport and then leave while he still has his health.

Olsonoski, who estimates he has wrestled in 30 states.

"Fans are different in every state. A fan's response depends on the type of wrestling he or she is accustomed to seeing. If they're used to real brawling, they'll only react when there's a very bloody match," said Olsonoski. "If they're used to scientific wrestling, they'll be able to appreciate the subtler aspects of the game and boo when real violence takes place. But wrestling is a healthy outlet because a fan can go to the arena and get out his or her emotions."

Olsonoski, who has suffered a broken wrist, fluid on the knee, a dislocated hip, and back spasms in his brief career, works out two hours a day on

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and an hour a day on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

"You gotta keep in shape. Wrestling is the most demanding sport I've ever participated in," said Olsonoski.

In Georgia, Olsonoski currently teams with good friend Steve Kern as they feud against The Freebirds.

"I really hate those guys," said Olsonoski. "They stand for everything I despise in pro wrestling, the mindless violence, the brawling, the cheating, and lying."

Right now, Olsonoski is determined to repel The Freebirds' vicious challenges and, hopefully, get a shot at wrestling in Madison Square

Garden.

"I'd love to wrestle in the Garden. And I'd love a chance at a world title."

When away from the wrestling wars, Olsonoski involves himself in his hobbies with the same single-minded determination he invests in wrestling.

"I love racquetball, tennis, and attending rock and roll concerts," said Olsonoski. "As for favorite foods, well, I guess I like anything that's put in front of me."

As for Olsonoski's future plans, he is convinced that he won't be wrestling for a very long period.

"I hope to wrestle, save my money, and retire at a young age and enjoy life," he said. □



Ted DiBiase lost his North American title to Masked Grappler shortly before this issue went to press

Q: "Ted DiBiase, are you going to show us what The Masked Grappler keeps putting in his boot and mask which enables him to hurt people and make them bleed?" Gordy Rush, New Orleans, LA

A: Ted DiBiase was delighted to respond to any question concerning his newest nemesis. "That Masked Grappler thinks he can fool people," Ted said. "Well, you know what Abraham Lincoln said about fooling people some of the time. Grappler might think he can get away with maiming people until the end of time. He's making one big mistake, an error which could cost him his career when I finish with him."

Q: "I'm a great fan of Austin Idol. Could you please tell me where he's been wrestling and if he has any plans to return to Georgia wrestling?" Dennis Thomas, St. Thomas, VI

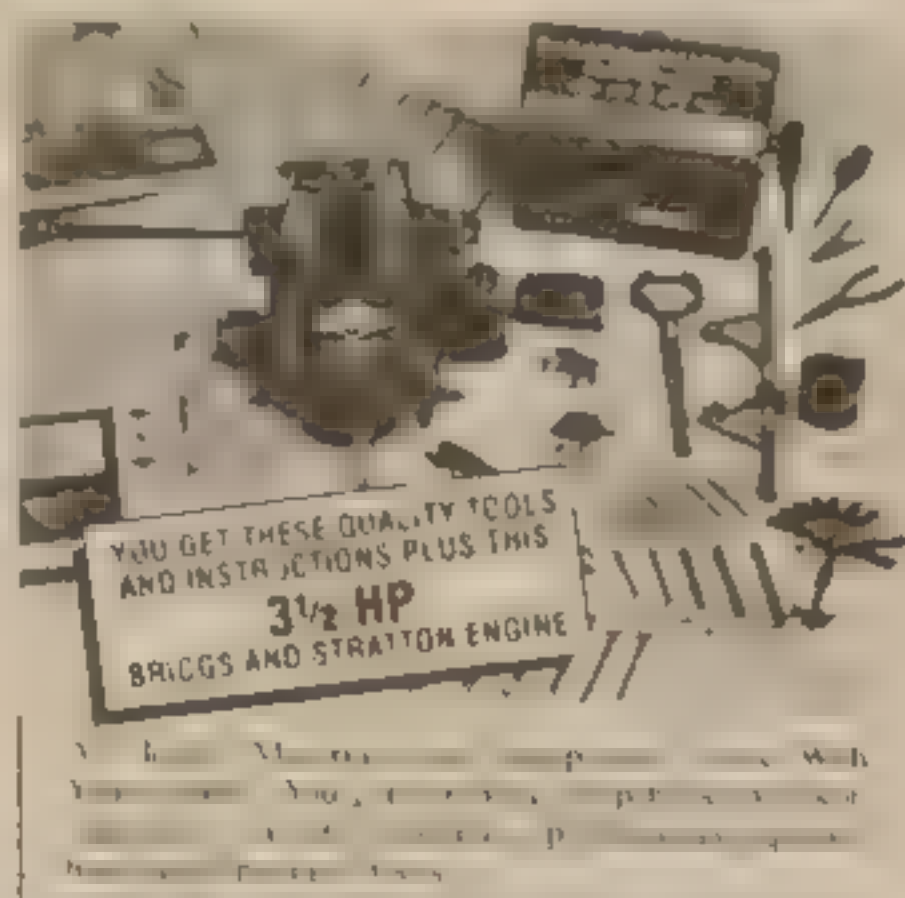
A: At this writing, Austin Idol is negotiating with Georgia promoters for a possible return to that area. □

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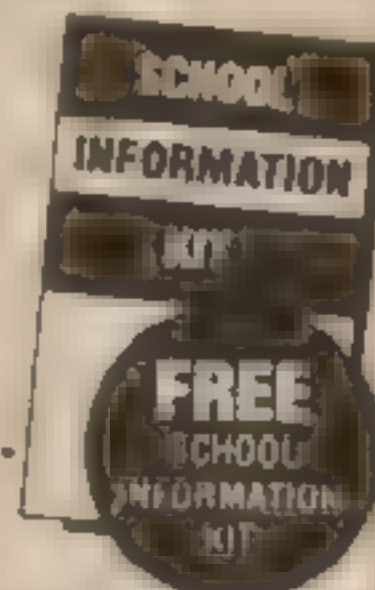
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WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from Page 10)

competing in a one-night tournament . . . Ivan Koloff has entered the Mid-Atlantic region bent on destroying the likes of Ric Flair and especially Blackjack Mulligan. "Mulligan is a coward," says Koloff, a man who once teamed with the big man from Texas. "I will end his career!"

Stan Stasiak and Killer Brooks have won the Texas tag team title

"Rowdy" Roddy Piper is making his rulebreaking presence known in the Mid-Atlantic region

Hulk Hogan has returned to the United States after a very successful tour of the Orient with his manager, Fred Blassie. Blassie, by the way, has brought the giant Killer Khan to the WWF. He now has two new top contenders in the WWF, along with Stan Hansen, a



Bob Backlund never has to worry about a lack of competition. At least, not while Fred Blassie is around. Fearless Fred has brought Killer Khan (stomping Ray Candy above) and Stan Hansen into the WWF area.

man he managed the last time he was in the territory

Bruno Sammartino has signed a contract to grapple Sgt. Slaughter "I didn't hesitate for one moment when I heard Slaughter attacked my manager, Arnold Skoaland," said Sammartino. "You know, I just can't stand that doggone guy's attitude. He has to be stopped, and I'm just the one to do it. Just ask Larry Zbyszko."

It appears that the Masked Superstar is keeping to his word



Masked Superstar cleared much doubt about his intentions when he teamed with Paul Jones to defeat Jimmy Snuka (above) and Ray Stevens.

he is remaining a fan favorite. Recently Superstar teamed with Paul Jones and delighted the fans by mopping the ring with Jimmy Snuka and Ray Stevens.

Speaking about superstars, we hear that Superstar Billy Graham has been negotiating with Florida promoters for a stint there. Graham was recently seen on national television in "The World's Strongest Man" competition. Mr. Wrestling II is doing a fine job as co-announcer on "Georgia Championship Wrestling" along with award-winning announcer Gordon Solie.

(Continued on page 54,

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from Page 53)



Handsome Jimmy Valiant is determined to wrestle the AWA Southern title from Dr. Bill Irwin

Jimmy Valiant has his hands full trying to regain his AWA Southern title from Dr. Bill Irwin. "I know I may have cheated once in a while during my career," Handsome Jimmy explains, "but this Irwin dude cheats all the way through the match—and the referees don't do a damn thing to stop him!"

It's now Tojo Yamamoto wearing the Mid-Atlantic title after taking it from The Great Mephisto.

Mark Lewin is terrorizing wrestlers in Louisiana . . . Kevin Sullivan had an argument with tag team partner Ted Oates and piledrived Ted right into the mat. Ted suffered neck injuries and vows to pay Kevin back. We saw the incident and feel that the argument was over a silly little item. The two should patch things up immediately!

It's time we said something about John and Rick Davidson, a tag team around the Michigan territory. Recently they were in a real war against the Sheik and newcomer Malcom Monroe. The

Davidson brothers handled themselves perfectly and made Sheik and Monroe scurry for cover. Let's hope these boys start on a U.S. tour so you can appreciate their fine tag team style.

In Green Bay, Wisconsin, a two-ring battle royal was signed with the winner of ring #1 and ring #2 to grapple each other at a later date. Well, it should be one great battle—Andre the Giant will take on the huge Crusher Blackwell. Films of the match between Ted DiBiase defending his North American title against new champion Masked Grappler reveal that Grappler probably used a "loaded boot" to knock Ted unconscious. But officials will not reverse the decision.



Having lost a disputed decision to Masked Grappler, former North American champion Ted DiBiase is negotiating to wrestle in Georgia.

Junkyard Dog has shown the world he has recovered fully from his eye injury. Together with Terry Orndorff, Junkyard won the Louisiana tag team title. Junkyard—you are an inspiration to us all!

And that's what's happening! See you next time! ☐

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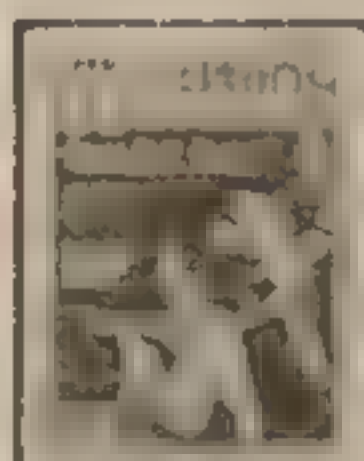
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HUSSEIN ARAB

(Continued from Page 33)



Hussein buckles Diamonds' knees and puts a dent in his back with a metal chair. According to Steve Farhood's grandmother, Hussein fears an ancient Arab power which Diamond may well possess.

Diamond, I've known Hussein Arab for some time now and believed he was incapable of fear. To hear Arab suddenly reluctant to wrestle someone arouses my suspicions. I knew it couldn't be based on physical fear, for Arab considers himself the strongest man alive. I knew it couldn't be intellectual fear, for Arab considers himself a genius. And it couldn't be emotional, for Arab has few emotions.

So it had to do with Arab weaponry. What better place to focus my attention than on Arab's boots? But what about the boots? Was Swebs merely planning to pull them off Arab, a monumental feat ranking with pulling an inside straight flush?

I dismissed that. Besides, why would Swebs bother traveling to Syria? It had to do with something about neutralizing

Arab's boots.

Now what would Swebs find in Damascus that he couldn't find in America? First of all, everyone speaks Arabic. If he wanted to find any secret words in the proper language, you'd go to Syria. So propelled by my unerring instincts, positive I was on the right track, I returned home to New York. There, I sought out the guidance of an ancient seer well-schooled in Arab customs and languages, a woman without peer in the mystic Arab world.

My grandmother.

Hopping the subway, I visited Grandma. At first she wouldn't answer the door. I pressed my ear to the door and heard the call of the third race at Aqueduct. I relaxed, knowing she wouldn't budge. I waited for the response. I heard her grumble and knew

she'd picked a loser. Knowing Grandma, she probably had a place bet and the horse finished third. Finally she let me in. Before I could blink, the table quivered beneath the weight of Lebanese delicacies. She wouldn't let me even talk until I'd devoured enough *hummus* to feed all of Beirut for a week. After proclaiming myself full and losing two hands of gin at a nickel a box, Grandma listened to my story. Her eyes widened as I spoke, giving me hope. After she had finished, she leaned back and stared with big sad eyes.

"Steven, Steven, Steven. You are entering a dangerous world. This world is full of risk for those who are not quick of mind and experienced. Lesser men have been ruined

"If Hussein Arab genuinely fears your friend Swebs, he must fear the power of the mikvah," her voice hissed, frightening me. "This mikvah must not be tampered with. Obviously Swebs understands it. So does Arab. Only these two men can fight it out. No one must interfere in the battle of the mikvah. Once unleashed, it could consume all."

I asked her if Arab would continue to avoid Swebs. She shook her head.

"He cannot," said Grandma. "As hard as he tries, if Arab knows Swebs has the power of the mikvah, Arab must meet him in battle or he will be lost. Once you understand mikvah, you must be prepared to use it at every challenge. With power comes responsibility. And with responsibility sometimes comes death."

I debated warning Arab, but knew he already understood far more than I ever would. As for Sweet Ebony Diamond, he has taken a road that he can never turn off of. A road that will lead to one man's destruction. □

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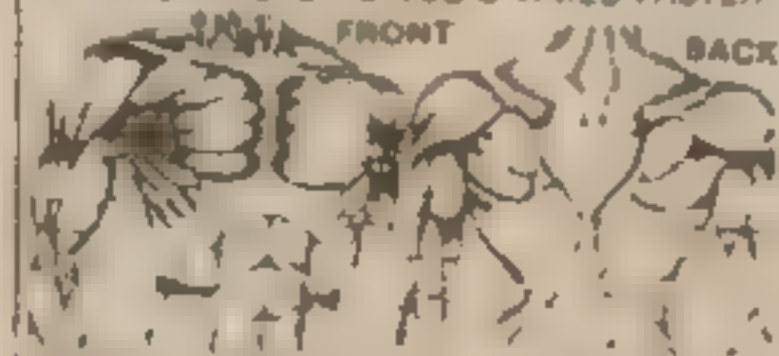
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Larry Zbyszko

(Continued from Page 35)



Garea looks for support from the Madison Square Garden crowd as he locks up Zbyszko's arm (above). Garea charges across the ring and knocks the wind out of Zbyszko with a toe to the midsection (below)

ever needed his kind of help

"I guess you hope a coward will change the color of the streak down his back from yellow to flesh, but that's a little unrealistic. Once a coward, always a coward. Nothing has changed with that wimp. Look what happened in our match

"From the moment the bell sounded, Garea ran away. I tried everything to get him to stand and wrestle like a man. That was my fault. You can't expect a coward to fight like a man. At one point I was so desperate to get some action going I asked the referee to make Garea wrestle. Silly me. I forgot that referee, like all the ones who ref my matches, have been paid off by the Backlund-Skoaland-Sammartino clique

"I feel bad that fans must pay



their hard-earned dollars to watch a coward run away. My fans were there cheering me on. They deserve the very best

wrestling possible, which they always get from my end. But to pay money to see a worm like Garea slither away, his ugly little face twisted with fear just burns me up and definitely upsets the fans

"You know, if Garea hadn't mouthed off after the match about me, I wasn't going to publicize what he said during the chasing. I finally cornered the creep and he started whimpering and tears filled his eyes. It was right then that Tony Garea begged me not to hurt him!"

Most reporters expected Garea to explode in angry indignation when told of Zbyszko's cutting remarks. Instead, Garea simply shrugged and shook his head sadly

It saddens me to think a man in his position, holding the responsible position of professional wrestler, would stoop to such low tactics," said Garea

I like to think of a wrestling match as a fair exchange of maneuvers and styles. Fans come to the matches to see the very best, which is the biggest reason for the great popularity of wrestling in the world

"But when a man will go into the gutter and make up such horrible lies and distort the truth like that, well, I think it does a grave disservice to the sport

"I would hope in the future Zbyszko would confine himself to the important matters, like finding out who is the better wrestler through the fighting of a clean match. But I don't know if Zbyszko is capable of such fairness anymore. In a way, I feel very sorry for him. He's become pathetic." □

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CORRESPONDENT REPORTS

(Continued from Page 8)

In other bouts, Bret Hart lost to Duke Meyers by disqualification . . . Bruce Hart, British Commonwealth champ, stopped Carlo Peron . . . Big Jim Neidhart and Hercules Ayala won by disqualification over Mr. Sakurada and Kasavuba.

HARRISBURG, PA—Correspondent: Leonard Helman— Pedro Morales showed he's willing to take on the toughest guys in the WWF when he battled Larry Zbyszko, the self-proclaimed "New Living Legend." After being on the receiving end of a number of Zbyszko's dirty tricks, Morales fought back valiantly. After a



Pedro Morales' brawl with Larry Zbyszko ended in double disqualification when both combatants shoved the referee.

while all semblance of order was lost and the match dissolved into a brawl. Both ended up hitting the referee and a double disqualification was declared.

In other bouts, Angel Maravilla and Rick McGraw outsmarted Jose Estrada and Johnny Rodz . . .

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Tony Garea beat Baron Scicluna . . . Rick Stallone whipped Frank Williams.

COLUMBUS, OHIO—Correspondent: Tammy Epperson—A new era of professional wrestling started at the Ohio Center. The main event pitted Dusty Rhodes against Ole Anderson. The match started off pretty even. One blow followed another until Anderson seized the momentum and knocked Rhodes from the ring. Anderson jumped after Rhodes, grabbed the Dream, hauled him back into the squared circle, and rammed his skull into the ringpost. For that, Anderson was disqualified. Yet action continued after the bell as Rhodes chased Anderson back to the dressing room.

In other bouts, Terry Taylor defeated Dennis Condrey . . . The Masked Assassins cheated their way past Kevin Sullivan and Steve Keirn . . . Mr. Wrestling II stomped Ivan Koloff.

MIAMI BEACH, FLA—Correspondent: Neal Blaustein—The main event was an exciting NWA title bout between champion Harley Race and challenger Dick Murdoch. Both men gave it everything they had. They used devastating piledrivers, sleepers, Boston crabs, and suplexes. Still, neither could score a pinfall or submission. Fifty-eight minutes into the match, Murdoch applied a punishing figure-four leglock, but Race managed to avoid submission for the remaining two minutes and retained his title through a time limit draw.

In other bouts Les Thornton defeated Jim Garvin . . . Super Destroyer and Nikolai Volkoff destroyed Mike Graham and Scott McGhee . . . Lord Al Hays clobbered Tommy Yates . . . Bubba Douglas stopped Jeff Portz . . . Reggie Parks whipped Raul Mata . . . Jerry Brisco upended Alexis Smirnoff. ☐

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Q & A

(Continued from Page 21)



Flair fires a series of rights at a fallen Gene Anderson, opening a large gash on his forehead. Ric believes that Masked Superstar's apparent change to scientific wrestling might just be a momentary reaction to the manner in which Anderson handled him.

cheats, lies, hurts, maims, and has a vicious streak runnin' across one end of America to the other. There isn't one thing you can say good about him.

Q: He doesn't speak very highly of you.

A: That's because he's so twisted with jealousy he can't think straight. I think deep down, Valentine is jealous of my popularity, my good looks, and my overwhelming talent. You think if he weren't scared and jealous of me he wouldn't be running around the ring and would

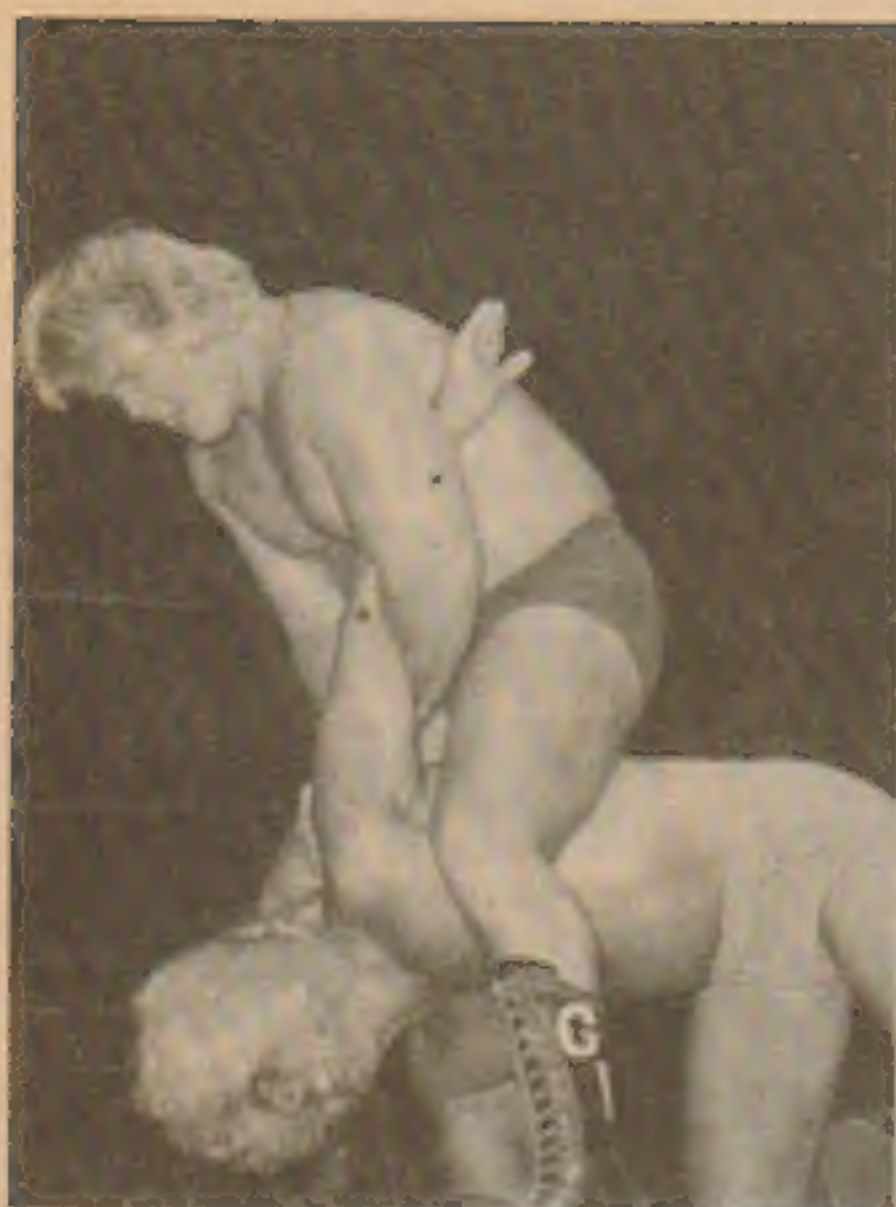
try, as difficult as it is for him, to wrestle cleanly?

Q: What's your feelings on wrestlers, formerly rule-breakers, who turn to scientific wrestling?

A: Like Paul Jones and Masked Superstar?

Q: Yes.

A: Well, I have a little skepticism, but I like to take it on a case-by-case basis. For example, Jones. I think him going bad was due more to frustrations and pressures of not receiving his proper accolades than actually believing the right road to success lies in



Though Greg Valentine took the U.S. title from Flair, he too has been unable to get an NWA title shot. Flair calls Race a coward.

breaking the rules.

Q: What about Masked Superstar?

A: Him I'm not so sure about. I get this feeling his turning good guy is more convenience and momentary reaction to the way Gene Anderson and his thugs treated him than really giving a damn about wrestling the right way or caring a hoot about the fans.

Q: But you will be teaming with him, right?

A: Yup.

Q: Isn't there something of an inconsistency in that?

A: No, because I've been down that road and know how important it is for someone to show friendship when you've just taken that difficult first step toward fairness. I hope Superstar really stays straight and by my teaming with him, I hope to guarantee he stays straight.

Q: What does the immediate future hold for Ric Flair?

A: If gutless Race or spineless Valentine dare, Ric Flair will win the NWA title or U.S. championship. ☐

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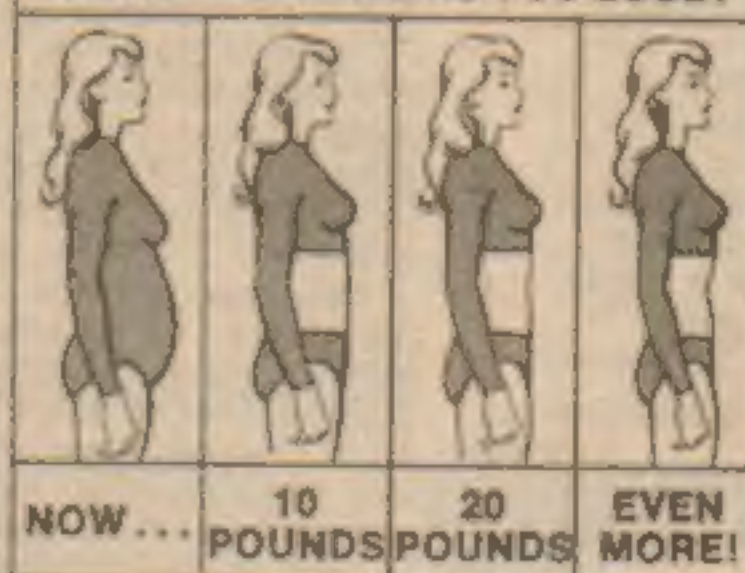
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